

of about 60 or 70 feet. A column of water from so great a height swelled by the water of the preceding smaller waterfalls, must during the rains present a sight at once picturesque and grand. We observed some huge pieces of stones torn by it from the side of the hill and lying about the basin into which the water falls. Afterwards we proceeded to the brink of the precipice from which the five virgins are said to have thrown themselves into the chasm below.

About half a mile west of Panchkumar, stands another hill at the foot of which are the Kaldaha and Maldaha, two deep basins of water in the bed of the Mán. In the former a mysterious iron chain is said to hang from the sides of the hill, the object of which is not known. The upper end of this chain is fixed to the rock, and the lower is supposed to support some thing mysterious, which no strength has yet been able to lift out of the water. We could not see the chain, as even the upper end is not visible till the water subsides considerably in March or April.

About half a mile from the Kaldaha, may be seen the river Haha, as it glides down the hill on which it takes its rise. This place is well known for a species of fish called 'Khajur,' which is said to live almost solely on milk, and is considered very delicious. The inhabitants in the neighbourhood own large herds of buffaloes, and as these animals delight in lying in the water for hours, the Khajur has no difficulty in finding the food on which it subsists. The fishes are occasionally seen hanging by the teats of the buffaloes, if the latter happen to rise suddenly from the water.

When wishing to catch these fishes, the natives drive herds of buffaloes into the water and then throw a net near them. The Khajur is not found anywhere else.

## II.

*On various places situated in Sub-Division Banka, Bhágalpúr.*

23rd August, 1869.—The following legend is related regarding the origin of Somokhia, a place about six miles north-west of Banka. The founder of the Ghatwál family of the place, named Gautam Panday, was employed as astrologer to the

first Rájá of Kharakpúr. One day when the latter was going to angle, he asked his astrologer to foretell what sport he was to secure. Gautam answered, "Your majesty will catch a Títur (a species of bird) to-day." The Rájá thereupon burst into a laugh, and in derision showed him his fishing-rod. Gautam, however, full of confidence in the accuracy of his favourite art, persisted in saying, he was to catch a Títur and nothing else that day. The Rájá went to his nearest tank, and threw his hook into it, when behold! the prey which his angle dragged to shore was not a fish, as he had taken it to be, but a Títur. Pleased and astonished the Rájá now asked Gautam to name a place in his estates, that he might grant it him as a reward. Gautam consulted the stars, in order to ascertain the spot where his family name and glory would never become extinct, but could find no propitious ground for the purpose, except some uninhabited jungles. The place, no sooner asked, was granted, and was called by him 'Somokheyo,' imperishable. The hopes and predictions of the astrologer have, however, been falsified; for the glory of his family has now departed with their possessions.

On my way from Somokhia to Cozhí, I visited the Jhurna, named after the spring at the foot of the hill, where a great mela, or fair, is held on the last day of Pús in honour of the goddess supposed to preside over the spring. The temple was built by Rájá Debai, one of the race of Khetaurí, on the rocks overhanging the spring. It was once situated near the gate of his fort, and has entirely disappeared; but the exotic creepers and plants, still seen around the ruins, attest the care and attention once bestowed upon the temple. A few hundred yards from the spring, I was shown the place where once stood the palace of the Rájá himself. But a few stones and bricks are all that is left to mark the spot so memorable in connection with a race which appears to have monopolized the sovereignty of the whole of Bihár just before the Muhammadan conquest of the country.

*Camp Cozhí, 24th August.*—On arriving at Cozhí, I inspected the operation of iron smelting. This was carried on only by the Kols, neither the Hindús, the Muhammadans, nor the Santháls taking any part in it from some prejudice or other. The

iron is smelted in an earthen oven of the form of a cylinder, coal being generally used as fuel. It is curious that the union of a man and a woman is always considered absolutely necessary for the operation, the general belief, both among the initiated as well as the uninitiated being, that the iron ore would not melt unless the fire beneath be blown with a pair of bellows worked by a man with his younger brother's wife passing her arms round his waist from behind.

As far as I could judge, the metal was not completely extracted from the ore by the rude process employed. The ore is dug out from mines in the jungles.

*25th August.*—I ascended one of the hills of Cozhí, which is named Phúkí in consequence of a large cavity at the top which, according to some, is the passage by which the Giant Mayebbee fled to the nether world after his overthrow by Rájá Bálí, and through which his blood subsequently flowed when killed, as related in the Rámáyana. On ascending, I observed that it was a horizontal cavity probably hewn out of the solid rock by some recluse who had retired to it from the world, in order to pass his days in contemplation and prayer. The people, of course, spoke of mysterious holes existing in it, which had communication with the nether world. But the cavity emitted a horrible stench, and was too dark in some parts to allow of a minute examination. Having, however, seen the Buddhist caves of Khondgiri in the district of Púrí, I could not resist the conviction that the cavity in the Phúkí hill was an abortive attempt at imitating those wonderful vaulted halls amounting to some hundreds, each of which, and sometimes several, have been hewn, without fracture, out of a single piece of rock.

*26th August.*—Visited all the villages comprised within the circular range of hills which go under the name of Cozhí. From Calcutta to Púrí and Sambalpúr on one side, and Delhi, Rúrkí, and Hardwár, on the other, I have not seen a spot more romantically situated than Cozhí, surrounded as it is by a ring of hills which, in the rays of the sun, present the appearance of an annular eclipse, and bounded as it is on three sides by a stream gliding at the foot of the hills over a bed of sand. It

appeared rather surprising to me that Rájá Debai should, in troublesome times, have fixed his capital outside rather than within this impregnable natural fortress, which is about ten miles in circuit. The climate of Cozhí is, however, considered very unhealthy. This may be the effect of prejudice, as the Hindús have a natural antipathy to hills and the sea. The highest of the Cozhí hills, named Bhorom, is inconsistently enough believed to be the ill-fated residence of Ráma, whence his wife Sítá was taken away by Rávana. The name of the hill, which means 'error,' is said to refer to the circumstance of Ráma's pursuing a counterfeit deer, which caused the loss of his beloved wife. The trace of a well is all that is to be seen on the spot connected with the memory of this deified hero.

Panchboti where Sítá's abduction is believed to have taken place, is situated on the banks of the Godávarí near the present town of Násik. But the natural proneness of human nature to associate localities with great names, seems to have led the Hindús to identify not only Cozhí, but various other places in India with reminiscences of Ráma's wanderings. At Bhubaneswar near Khondgiri, the priests show pilgrims the spot where Sítá gave birth to twins, though that honour more properly belongs to Valmiki's hermitage near Bithur. I was shown the footprints of Ráma alike on the marble rocks of the Narbadda near Jabalpúr as well as on the stones buried in the bed of the Mahánaddí near Sambalpúr.

In the boundary line between Cozhí and Kukwára, stands a Kenchi tree bearing the signatures of all versed in letters who pass by the way. The bark, it is believed, possesses the singular virtue of spontaneously tracing the Nágari characters which compose the name of Ráma and of retaining any inscriptions written on it for ages, the growth of the tree making them ascend higher and higher from the ground. The tree has given name to the village on the confines of which it is situated. For the village is called Likhní Cozhí,—*Likhni* signifying to write, and *Cozhí* being a corruption of *Kenchi*. It is highly probable that the principal village, Cozhí, which has given name to the whole mahall and the long range of hills in it, has derived its own name from a large number of Kenchi trees which formerly grew there.

*25th December.*—A mile from Chhetar are the ruins of an old fort or rather cutchery, where a high Muhammadan functionary used to reside for the purpose of collecting rent. His oppressions, it is said, spread misery far and wide, and even the zamíndárs were subjected to every species of indignity. The great grandfather of the present zamíndár, Teknaráyan Singh, resolved to rid the world of so great a tyrant, waited on him, of course without arms, and was admitted. As he approached, the Muhammadan dignitary rose to receive him, and by way of salutation extended both his hands which the athletic visitor caught in his own with so powerful a gripe, that the tyrant was stretched a corpse on the ground, without even being able to give alarm. Coming out, he informed the guards at the door of the sudden death of the functionary, and as they entered the house in confusion, he beat the great drum and gave the signal for a general rise against the Muhammadan rule.

*29th December.*—About 6 miles from Bhitia, rise the hills of Fullidumer, which form a sort of natural fortification around the village of that name. There is an opening towards the north, which was formerly fenced by a mud wall. The traces of this wall have now completely disappeared under the cultivator's plough, but men are still living who saw it almost entire. Within this impregnable natural fortress, there lived a Khetaurí Rája by name Fath Singh, who is stated to have lived at the commencement of the British rule. It is said that he waged a long and obstinate contest for independence; but at last his followers were cut off till he had not a single soldier left to guard his fortress. In this stress he contrived, however, to keep up the show of a large army by fixing 1200 guns on the mud wall above-mentioned, and firing them with the aid of his women and servants. The almost simultaneous discharge of so many guns from the ramparts of an impregnable fortress kept his enemies at bay, and also helped to keep the surrounding country in subjection. But at last the artifice was discovered, and then he fell without a struggle.

*7th January, 1870.*—At Dáopúr about seven miles north of Lachmípúr, may be seen the ruins of some buildings regarding

which the following tradition exists. In the year 965, Faslí, two brothers, Sinha Rái and Sursi Rái, having been deprived by their relations of their share of ancestral property, abandoned their native place of Khurchuta in Hazáríbágh, and arriving at Deogarh, fell in *dhurna* before the great idol. The oracle commanded them to travel towards the north, where riches and prosperity awaited their descendants. They accordingly came to this Sub-Division, which was then full of jungles, and as the present thákur of Lachmípúr traces his genealogy to these brothers, the prediction of the oracle is believed to have been fulfilled. Sinha Rái's son, Ranbhím Rái, cleared the forests and founded the village which is now called Jamdahá; but it was at the time of his grandson, Sujun Rái, that the place rose to great importance, and excited the cupidity of the Rája of Kharakpúr. The latter accordingly equipped with a large army, and built an outpost at Dáopúr. The rapid Chandan\* flowed between the two contending parties. Sujun Rái, of course, thought himself no match for his rival, who had just then established his sovereignty over the ruins of the states of fifty-two Khetaurí Rájas. So he adopted a stratagem instead of having recourse to open battle. He spread a rumour to the effect that he had collected a very large army in the jungles, and in order to confirm this, he caused several thousands of *donás* (cups made of *sál* leaves) to float down the stream with *sathú* and *dahí* sprinkled over each, so as to lead to the impression that the soldiers had taken their meals on them. The course of the stream brought these *donás* below Dáopúr, and as each *doná* represented a soldier, the Rája was led to conclude that he had to deal with an army much larger than his own. This was not all. Sujun Rái, with the aid of a very powerful horse, leaped unseen over the Rája's battlements at night, and having fixed a dart into the masonry floor where the Rája slept, came away without taking his enemy's life which he might easily have done. The Rája was not only frightened at these proofs of his antagonist's skill and prowess, but was filled with admiration at his magnanimity.

\* According to Col. Franklin, the Chandan is the *Erannoboas* of the Greeks; *vide* his 'Inquiry into the site of the ancient Palibothra.'

But *vide* Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Vol. I, p. 453. THE EDITOR.

He immediately retreated, and never afterwards disturbed Sujun in his possessions.

19th January.—Nearly a mile from Poir, is an opening between two hills called Murtangá, meaning ‘head suspended.’ It has derived this name from the circumstance of a leader of the hill men having been executed at the place. His head was suspended from a tree as a warning to the savages who used to enter the country by the pass, and harass the former zamíndár of Poir by incessant incursions. On one of these hills may be seen a temple containing an emblem of Shíva; which is supposed to guard over the destiny of this now ill-fated family. The emblem itself is said to have undergone various vicissitudes of fortune. For some time it was the property of an oilman, who used it as a weight for selling oil during the day, and as a press over his wares during the night. Not well pleased with the duty it had to perform, it appeared to the great grandfather of the present zamíndár of Poir in a dream, and representing its distress, wanted to be adored and fed with offerings. The dreamer at first built a temple for it in the plains; but as if elated with too sudden prosperity, or afraid of being reduced to its former condition, it demanded to be located in a temple on the hill. So the present temple was built.

20th January.—At Kurmahát, there is a very old brick building, the walls of which only are standing. A very good *pucka* road leads from it to some other buildings which are now entirely in ruins. These buildings are generally said to be hunting villas of Sháh Shujá’, and are therefore called Shikárgáh by the learned; but according to the popular belief, they rose up in one night as if by enchantment, and were used by an emperor whom they call Rúmsháh.

There is a very old well at Poir which is also attributed to the same emperor.